



The Seattle, Washington Croatian Cultural Club taken during a party celebrating their first anniversary. Eleanore Dragos, leader of the group, is cutting the "Happy Birthday" cake.



in attendance. This was a wonderful opportunity for them to compare kolo patterns with other dancers, and renew acquaintances with Vyts Beliajus and also John Filcich who had been a guest of the Club in Seattle several times since it was organized.

The Club marked its first anniversary on November 7th with a dance and exhibitions including the now favorite "Plameno Kolo" with two others "Bachko Kolo" and "Erdejlanka".

If you think your group has no talent or ability along musical or dancing lines, you are urged to see what this group, with no previous dancing experience, has done. They are to be commended for their part in renewing interest in the culture and customs among the Yugoslavs in the Pacific Northwest.

American Squares Reunion

American Squares Reunion, Hotel Thayer, West Point, N.Y. November 28 and 29, 1953.

There are certain treasured moments when one has the feeling of being part of history, of being truly on with humanity past and present. Such a moment came to some of us at the American Squares Reunion at West Point last November, when so many people came to dance together, that ancient fundamental and most modern pleasure.

The Hotel Thayer provided surroundings of a luxury quite foreign to square and folk dancers. We are used to school gymnasiums, not grand ballrooms, and we plan to dine between sessions, if at all, on a hamburger at the corner drugstore, not on roast beef in a luxury dining room. We can only hope that the chef did not mind too much when he saw us treating his wonderful food merely as necessary fuel.

We arrived on Saturday afternoon, and most people after registering, rushed straight away into the Ballroom for the afternoon dancing. The program only, — this was not a school, and nothing was taught except for a brief walk through. It was impressive to realize that 150 people, many of us strangers to each other, had enough basic knowledge to enjoy such a widely varied program.

Bill Lewis, the originator of the whole idea, was the master of ceremonies for the afternoon dancing. The program included squares and contras, American and European couple dances and mixers.

The dancing for the afternoon ended at about 5:30, and we were allowed to sit down for a while, to see a very interesting movie about the Military Academy; and after a very brief interval it was dinner time. There was no need to make conversation; on all sides there sprang up small seminars and discussion groups on club organization, dances for children and teen agers, and everywhere we heard the wonderful comment that people were enjoying most that part of the program with which they were least

familiar. Indeed, it was noticeable during the evening that the people with mostly folk dance experience insisted on being in every square, while those who only square danced back home would occasionally sit out a square, but jump up at once for a contra or a folk dance.

Even before we were out of the dining room, Harold Harton had us doing calisthenics. If you have never been made by Harold to sing, or rather act "Deep and Wide", you have missed something. Of course, being on our feet, we were irresistibly drawn to the Ballroom and the evening's dancing.

There was a printed program for the evening, but we soon began to change it and add to it. There were many wonderful squares, called by Frank, Harold and Rickey, and many fine spontaneous variations form the call contributed by the floor, particularly Charlie Webster. We also danced with Olga's instruction, the English squares "La Russe" and "Cumberland Square". We danced the best of the contras too, including "Hull's Victory", "French Four", the "Witshire Tempest". We watched March Tipton's group from Metuchen dance "Sheena", and we watched Frank and Olga enjoying themselves with "Put your Little Foot". Dancing lasted until 1 A. M. and singing and talk until much later.

It is understandable that when we met at breakfast at 8:30 next morning, the first question was "How late did you stay up last night?" But we soon revived under the influence of coffee, bacon and eggs and companionship, and presently set out under the guidance of Bill Lewis for a tour of West Point. From the experimental hexagonal cannon to the most modern swimming pool in the most modern gymnasium in the world, we saw it all. It was delightful to be conducted around by such an enthusiast; and we are promised a swim in the pool at our next reunion in the Spring of 1954.

At noon we assembled for another wonderful dinner. Many spent an hour or two visiting the fascinating military museum, he balance of the afternoon went in a flurry of packing, checking out and saying reluctant good-byes before starting on our several ways.

Jessie Mc Williams

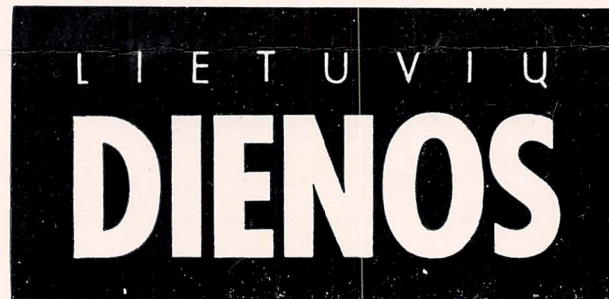


JR. JAMBOREE

Between 2 and 5 PM on Dec. 27th, 77 squares of juniors from 5 years to 18 danced at the Sunny Hill Hall (1 mile north of Fullerton). The spectacle was heartwarming, truly, a sight to behold. Leonard Jones of Long Beach was the over-all manager of this delightful deal. Jonsey Jones and Harriet Blohm led the Grand March and two squares of oldsters, ages 5 and 6, opened the program. They brought the house down. Billye Grafton was their prompter. Because of the success of this spectacle the event will be repeated once again on April 25th at the same place and the same time. Don't Miss It!



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I finally left Chicago for the West on November 29th. Through and ad in the paper I shared a ride with Mr. Eugene Belluomini who was returning to San Jose, Calif., but agreed to go via Denver and Southwest.

My little precious niece Nancy sent over a hurried note in her firm, childish scribble: "Dear Vyts. Have a good trip. I will miss you, so please hurry back. Love. Nancy." So with Nancy's blessing and Neil Handelman's expert packing, we seated ourselves in a '51 DeSoto and were on our way.

Our first stop was in Fort Madison, Iowa, where I conducted a class for the students of St. Mary's School, pupils of Dr. Frank Lyman, whose guests we were in his beautiful home overlooking the town and the Mississippi River.

In Denver I spent a whole week, seeing old friends, conducting classes and having a check-up and a good time. It was Halloween the evening we reached Denver. I had hardly settled in my motel when there was a banging on the door. I couldn't imagine who knew so soon of my arrival. I opened the door and there stood three urchins, masked and costumed, saying: "Trick or treat." I had nothing with me to give them and I profusely apologized to them. They accepted my apology and said, "That's awright, mister, we'll treat you." One gave me a popsicle, the second a cookie, while the third some bubble gum, and left with good wishes. Something like that never happened to me before, and after they left I thought, "Gee, I could have given them at least a few pennies each," but didn't think of it."

You may also get a chuckle from the following. I entered a restaurant and ordered a bowl of soup and returned to my deep thoughts. A minute later the waiter returned and inquired, "Scotch?" I looked up at him and wondered if this was one of the places which "reserves the right to seat or serve customers it chose." The place didn't look exclusive, or was it a place for the Scottish only? "Lithuanian" I shot back.

"We don't serve that kind. Only Scotch split pea or tomato rice."

"Oh Scotch, please." Was my face red. We traveled through New Mexico and visited again the Indian Pueblos there. They are always a source of fascination to me and someday I hope to spend at least a month in that country. The trip was enjoyable and unevenful except when we approached Truth and Consequence, New Mexico. We still had some 15 miles to to reach that town. The sun was setting. The rural area is uninhabited. We just zoomed down a gulley and were about to roll upward, when, bang!... a flat tire. We had to unload the entire rear to get to the tool. Flashing the flash-light back and forth so that no car would run into us while coming at full speed down the hill, and after much trouble we finally succeeded in changing the tire. The thing is that before we left Chicago I had asked Mr. Belluomini whether the tires were in good condition, as they were his headache. He assured me that they were practically new. As it turned out it was an old over-used tire. He didn't tell the Truth so he suffered the Consequence and of all places... near the city of Truth and Consequence, New Mexico.

We reached San Diego November 10th. Evelyn Prewett and Walter Rephun were the first to see to my comforts, providing me with transportation, etc. Soon they, Mildred Blickenstaff and Bill Francis, on separate days, took me apartment hunting. It was despairing. All we could see was mostly unappetizing joints at a high rate of rent. (n one miserably rainy day (excuse me, it never r-a-i-n-s in Calif. It must have been a little cloud in the sky which couldn't find its way to Florida), we even paid five bucks to a placement agency who furnished us with a dozen addresses of dark nooks at high rates. The following day, after a week and half of roaming and slumming we came across a place which must have waited for my arrival. High on a hill at 7th and Ash across from the Snazzy El Cortez Hotel and overlooking all the roofs of down-town with a view over the Bay, Point Loma, Coronado, the Pacific, the hills into Mexico, and close to all conveniences, including lovely Baloba Park. And that's where I roost now.

As for Southern California's wether, well, it is everything they say it is, plus (the "plus" is with reservations)



Some of the folk dance leaders of the Toronto, Ontario, Canada area at the home of Miss Helen Bryan, Phys. Ed. instructor at the Ontario College, having tea with Vyts. On floor, 1 to r: Carson and Margaret Whelan, Sylvia Melson, Frank Moore, Jane Giori. here were many more. (Foto—Frank Giori)

—plenty sunshine, everything in bloom, poinsettas as big as a house, tall—that is. You actually bake during the day, but inside an unheated building, like the halls of Balboa Park where the folk dancing is done, or in shade or after three PM, Man! you freeze and shiver! I now know what our poet Stephen Foster meant in his Susannah song, "The sun so hot, I froze to death." You sure enough can do that in California.

The city streets and Balboa Park in particular, was a sight to behold during the Christmas season. It beat anything I've yet seen. The park is beautiful, utilitarian and the city's recreational center. The buildings housing museums, etc., are of charming beauty. The city itself is neat and interesting. They say this is a Navy-town. Unless one goes to a certain section of town the Navy is not in evidence, but their influence is felt. They serve here Navy bean soup and "navel" oranges.

We have a Lithuanian colony here too, consisting of about 60 families. There is a Lithuanian club called the "American Lithuanian Society of San Diego", of which Mr. Edward Sirutis is president; Mrs. H. Shaulys, secretary; Mrs. P. Zaunis, Mrs. Al Pieža and Mr. F. Raškinis being the other officers. he club is now preparing a program for the commemoration of Lithuanian former Independence Day on 14 February and I'm in charge of the program part. The club is basically a social one with the purpose of getting together once a month and spending the afternoon among fellow Liths.

The Christmas season was a very happy one. Again, many cards and many tokens of friendship. The San Diegans were particularly wonderful to me and made the holiday a truly happy one. We tried to see a Posada in Old Mexico but arrived there three hours to late and came back to San Diego to attend mid-night Mass in a Mexican church here. The rite was the same as everywhere, except that when Mass was over and the congregation filed by at the railing to kiss the Infant Jesus, the boys in the gallery burst out with whistling which lasted throughout the long period of the filing past. This whistling was in imitation of the birds who sang the first carols during the birth of Christ.

New Years Eve in the company of all my wonderful friends we spent at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Bill Francis, in Coronado, a grand couple as grand as the come. This being a small world, I discovered that Mrs. Francis hails from Virginia and neighbor of the Holladays and a'ong with Ty Holladay worked in a mission in the Belgian Congo. Ty, of blessed memory, is a sister of our Mrs. Nelle Boand, active in Chicago's International House folk dance group and a dear friend of ours for nearly 20 years. So, of course, that makes me and the Francis family "kin folk."

I was tempted to go to Pasadena with the bunch to